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life begins almost immediately after the marriage ceremony, or at the most within six months. For the purposes of the above analysis, the year when their effective married life started has been regarded as the year of marriage.

Further analysis of the case-histories reveals an almost uniform pattern of development in a majority of cases. For a year or so after his marriage a son continues to live with his parents. His wife also lives with him. Domestic quarrels and dissensions develop within this period and compel him to start thinking about separation. In some cases this takes place in the course of the next year; in others it may take three to five years. Those who can hold together for five years generally continue to live under the same roof peacefully for a much longer period. Nevertheless, separation is known to have taken place in some cases even after ten to fifteen years of living together.

A young married man separating from his parents or brothers generally maintains close connections with their family or families. However, as the immediate cause for separation is often a quarrel or an acute difference of opinion, for some time the separating families continue to have strained relations. They may not even be on speaking terms. With the passage of time much of the bitterness of the dispute wears off and cordiality gradually returns to the different branches of the same main family. When the relations between the main family and the seceding family are once again cordial, they start taking interest in each other's affairs and problems. Ceremonies, feasts and festivals bring them all together. Rites connected with the major crises of life are great occasions for family reunions. Particularly in the event of death old quarrels and misunderstandings are generally forgotten and all near-relations assemble for the last rites. In the rituals that follow the presence of all the branches of the family is regarded as obligatory, and the absence of anyone at such an occasion is bound to be viewed very seriously. This would almost always lead to a permanent breach of relations between the absenting unit and the other units of the same family.

In this context it is necessary to point out that an equivalent of the term 'family' is used in the community to denote three different social units, each varying from the other slightly. It may mean: (1) the elementary family or the 'house', (2) the extended family unit, or (3) a still larger group comprising the near-

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bad way, the elders of the allied families are expected to intervene. 596
Scandals or dishonourable behaviour in one unit are likely to spoil the name of all the allied families, and as such tradition enjoins elders to advise, warn and even admonish the erring members. A young man given to excessive drinking, gambling or any similar vice would often be admonished by the elders of this extended family. If he cannot keep his wife under control, or if the quarrels (626)
of the two become very frequent and too public, the neighbours would convey the information to the elders of the extended family and expect them to use their initiative in putting things right. In all such cases they will be within their customary rights if they intervene. They can demand that their advice is heard and followed.

Within the family unit the eldest male is generally regarded as the head. His wife or the next senior male is given the second place. A respectful son very often describes his old widowed mother as the 'head' of the family. However, in many cases the *de facto* head of the family may be a son under whose guidance and supervision the land is cultivated or the craft or profession of the family is practised. Parents dominate the scene in their youth and early middle age. With approaching old age they gradually recede to the background. Nominally they remain the heads of the family, but their sons are left more or less free to conduct the management of the family property and profession as they like. As long as the father remains the real head of the family, the internal management of the family remains the charge of the mother. Sons are expected to obey her and the daughters-in-law are expected to carry out her instructions. Any failure or reluctance on the part (606)
of a daughter-in-law to carry out the wishes of her mother-in-law leads to constant quarrels and complications, and in many cases to ultimate separation. Between sons and daughters, as a rule, preference is shown to the former, but if the sisters have considerable seniority in age, their younger brothers are expected to respect and obey them.

In the village community of Shamirpet, which has considerable 829
variations of caste and class, and significant differences in education and urban contacts, it is only natural to expect great variations in the family ideals and ethics of the different groups. In the themes of their idealizations, the different sections of the population show striking similarities; but in their attitudes and reactions

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to specific social situations the different levels present remarkable contrasts.

For the purposes of such comparison, the population of the village may be broadly classified into three levels:

(1) *Upper Level*: comprising the 'twice born' castes of Brahmins and Komtis: rich Reddis and Muslims; and others who have had urban contacts or education in the city.

(2) *Intermediate Level*: all ordinary agriculturists; clean occupational castes and Muslim tradesmen constitute this group, which is by far the largest in the village.

(3) *Lower Level*: all the poorer sections of the population, such as the untouchable Malas and Madigas, and semi-tribal Vaddars and Erkalas, as well as poor Muslims, can be placed in this category.

With their urban contacts and education, as well as considerations of 'respectability' befitting their class, the people on the upper level set sufficiently high standards of behaviour. The stereotyped idealizations of the other two levels of population closely resemble the ideal-patterns of the upper level.

All three levels regard solidarity, co-operation and understanding as the essential attributes of the family that may be regarded as a model for the whole community. The ideal family should work on the principle of 'one for all, and all for one.' Different members of the family should function like an organized team, and have mutual trust and understanding. Toleration, goodwill and a sense of give-and-take among its members are necessary for the well-being and prosperity of the family. On the other hand, dissensions, conflicts and lack of understanding lead a family to its downfall.

There is unanimity in all three levels that the structure of the family is founded on its recognition of four basic principles. These are:

(1) Respect for age.
(2) Respect for position in the scale of kinship.
(3) Superiority of the male.
(4) Necessity of keeping certain family matters confined to the responsible members of the family, or at the most, within the family.

Further, in all three levels the importance of compromise as a

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tool for correct ordering of intra-family relations is emphasized. Mediation and reconciliation are regarded as the best methods of getting over family difficulties; timely partition of property and separation as the next best.

The people in the upper level not only believe in these ideals, but most of them consciously strive to achieve them in actual practice. A Brahmin will lose respect in the community if he gives up these noble ways and starts imitating the 'animal-like ways' of people on the lower levels. Prosperity of the Komti traders and money-lenders can be built up only when the whole family makes a concerted effort for it. A family of substantial agriculturists can further augment its land and improve its financial status by working hard as a team. This is equally applicable to both Hindu and Muslim agriculturists. People with urban contacts and education have also an urge to rise higher; and that necessitates solidarity, co-operation and understanding within the family. Great emphasis is laid here on correct behaviour towards different members of the family according to their age and kinship status. Disagreements must be expressed through permitted ways. Abuse and foul language should not be employed in referring to or addressing the elders. Any form of physical violence against them would be unthinkable and would cause great resentment in the other members of the family. Women on this level are generally kept confined to the home. Among the Muslims they observe strict *purdah*; among the Hindus for considerations of respectability it would be improper for them to go out to work. Thus they are largely confined to their houses. They have some ornamental value; nevertheless, in the entire social setting the comparative superiority of the male is latent. Family secrets on this level are always discussed in hushed tones, and all possible efforts are made to prevent them from leaking out. When husband and wife quarrel, the angry outburst must not be heard outside the home. If the husband beats the wife, her crying should not be loud enough to attract curious sympathizers into the house. The amours and intrigues of a member of the family, if they cannot be stopped, should at least be kept secret, and efforts should be made to prevent them from developing into open scandals. Mediation or arbitration by family elders is often effective for settling disputes within these families. If the misunderstandings and consequent difficulties seem to be beyond repair, property is gracefully

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829 partitioned, and separation granted to the members who want to
565 secede from the family. This is sought to be done in an orderly
593 way, and every possible effort is made to ensure that the differences within the family do not become the subject of local gossip.

When we consider the actual behaviour of the people on the intermediate level, we find that many of these ideals are very considerably diluted. The value of solidarity is understood, but the willingness to make concessions and personal sacrifices for the sake of the family is not sufficiently strong to make it really effective. Age is generally respected, but in angry outbursts abuse
[201] may be showered on parents and uncles. Unable to control his temper one may even spit at them, or throw dust at them (symbolizing their burial, and thus indirectly wishing their death), or strike them. It would probably be necessary to express some sort of an apology for this unbecoming behaviour later, but the unrepentant individual can repeat it when he is provoked again. This type of behaviour is confined to a few individuals, and is socially criticized but none the less tolerated. Here too the superiority of the male is insisted upon, but the woman also works and is not tied down to many of the shackles of respectability. She does not lose face if she is beaten by her husband semi-publicly; occasionally she hits him back. She expresses her anger or suffering by running back to her parental home. In many cases some effort is made to conceal family secrets, but when passions rise, a father and son, or two brothers, but more often a mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, will openly quarrel in the courtyard or the village lanes, and in the course of the hearty exchange of abuse these secrets may be broadcast by them at the top of their voices. Family differences are discussed privately and occasionally in public as well, but even when property is divided and separation is completed, mutual bickerings and exchange of harsh words continue for several months in most cases.

829 On the lower level the 'ideals' get diluted so much that it is
593 difficult to find any traces of them in actual practice. Division of
562 property and separation at this level are so frequent as to reduce
829 the conception of family solidarity to practically a meaningless ideal. On ritual occasions, respect is shown to people on account of their age or kinship status, but in everyday life one can ignore these considerations with impunity. Although theoretically the woman is inferior, at this level she enjoys much more freedom. She

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can work for wages and has considerable freedom of movement. Sexual lapses on her part are more liberally viewed. If the husband beats her, she too can beat him. If the abuses of her husband are loud, hers can be louder still. She can leave her husband and take another with comparative ease, and without any social stigma. This would permanently lower the status of persons on the upper level, and would be commented upon very adversely in the intermediate class. The family secrets are announced to the outside world by the members of the family itself in their open-air quarrels. Compromises are often made through mediation and arbitration, but may be disregarded with comparative ease after a few days.

It is probably needless to say that the above three levels are not fixed, nor are they exclusive. Modern education and other modern means of communication—especially the cinema—often infuse a spirit of romantic individualism into the youth of the upper level, who, rather than working for family solidarity, often disintegrate it. Education, urban contacts, 'disgust with rustic ways', and desire for greater respectability according to accepted social standards in some cases set in motion efforts at vertical movement in families on the lower levels.

2. INTER-PERSONAL RELATIONS WITHIN THE FAMILY

HUSBAND AND WIFE

According to the traditional norms of the society a husband is expected to be an authoritarian figure whose will should always dominate the domestic scene. As the head of the household he should demand respect and obedience from his wife and children. The wife should regard him as her 'master' and should 'serve him faithfully'. It is the husband's responsibility to provide adequately for the support and maintenance of 'his dependants' and the wife's duty is to 'run the household frugally and efficiently'. In an ideal home 'all major decisions are taken by the husband in consultation with his wife and grown-up children', but the final say in all matters connected with the family is always with the husband. The husband should 'watch the activities and ways of his wife' as well as 'take care of the proper upbringing of his children'. The wife should 'serve her husband with loyalty and devotion'. The husband is 'superior'; the wife is his 'subordinate'. As a mark of the recognition of his superiority, the wife shows respect to her

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husband by touching his feet. She washes the husband's clothes, and eats the leavings in his plate. The husband cannot do likewise. When the wife errs, the husband reprimands her, and can abuse and beat her. However, a good wife is not expected to answer him back. Even when the husband is wrong she is supposed to bear her lot meekly and submissively. This cultural pattern is reflected in the lament of the wife over her husband's demise, when she wails, 'Where is my lord? Where is my master? Now who will support me? The shield that protected me is gone; now I am helpless.'

This, then, is the 'ideal'. Almost everyone in the village would verbalize the expected husband-wife relationship in similar words. But the reality appears to be very different; and a close study of the actual family records would reveal that these ideals are more or less a social fiction. The husband is, without doubt, superior, and has, in most families, the upper hand; but practically nowhere do we find him a completely dominant, authoritarian and patriarchal figure. Moreover, the quality of inter-personal relations between husband and wife change as they leave one stage of life and enter another.

It has been pointed out earlier that married life is started by a couple under the parental roof. During this stage, at least for the first few months, they are not supposed to show any special concern for each other. The man continues to work under the direction of his father or elder brother; the woman carries out the instructions of her mother-in-law. There is hardly any opportunity for them to meet and talk during the day, and when they do meet under the cover of darkness, possibly in a separate room, the proximity of the parents' room does not allow them the liberty of engaging in audible love-play or even of talking freely. Of necessity they have to speak in whispers. The cultural pattern demands that the wife must resist the initial advances of her husband for several nights. She often feigns complete ignorance regarding sexual matters and displays horror and disgust when the husband approaches her. After two or three weeks the wife becomes more co-operative. Now sex dominates their life for the several months that follow. There is casual conversation between the two, but in these first months household affairs are invariably not discussed by them. The husband generally speaks to her about the village affairs and his kinsfolk. He also tells her his experiences of the city.

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The girl talks to him about her childhood friends in the village and about her relations. At this stage, even if she is troubled by her mother-in-law, she would not complain to her husband about her discomforts and difficulties at home. The stereotype norms that a girl unconsciously picks up from conversation between elderly women, or consciously learns as a result of direct instruction by her mother are: 'Unless the husband is completely under your influence, do not try to take him away from his mother. When your grip over him is firm, you can persuade him to do what you like. But any premature efforts on your part will only generate distrust about you in his heart.' Thus, she begins complaining to her husband about the bad treatment that she receives from her mother-in-law and the other women relations when she is sure that the relative strength of her influence over him is greater than theirs. The husband finds himself in a dilemma. He knows that a man who 'listens too much to his wife' is an object of social scorn and ridicule. Thus if he starts taking sides with his wife, the comment of the elders would generally be against him, and even the people of his own age-group would circulate funny, but often quite imaginary, stories about his submissiveness to his wife. On the other hand, he realizes that nearly everyone at some stage has to take sides, and that even his critics have had to do so, at some point in their lives. His position becomes really difficult when he is subjected to pressure simultaneously from two directions: when the mother complains about his wife and the wife complains about his mother. To begin with, most sons ignore these complaints and accusations, and refuse to take sides. In the next stage they side with, or at least pretend to side with, the mother. For the satisfaction of the mother the son would scold the wife once or twice. If the wife takes it ill, she would refuse to speak with him when they meet in the night. The husband has then to make some efforts to console her. Often he says to her that he did not intend any of his remarks to be taken seriously. Or he may even say that the mock-scolding was meant only to satisfy the old mother. The wife takes this opportunity to narrate more accounts of sufferings that she has to undergo in the house, on account of the troublesome mother-in-law and the other deceitful female relatives. In a joint family this continues, but in a great majority of cases after some years the husband and wife secede from the main family to set up an independent household of their own.

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593 With the setting up of an independent houshold the nature of husband-wife relations undergoes a definite change. Now the two are free to run their own affairs. No doubt the husband has not now to work under anybody's supervision, but he also lacks the security provided by the joint family. Similarly, the wife has no longer to slave for her mother-in-law, but all the same she has to do the entire work connected with the running of the household. The husband is now the real head and has to work hard to provide for the maintenance of the family. The major share of the family's subsistence comes through his labour; in some cases the wife also assists him. In many families, a small part of the family's earnings may be contributed by the wife also. But the main task of the woman is to run the household and manage the domestic economy. As far as possible the house should be kept neat and tidy, children and cattle should be well looked after, and above all at fixed hours meals should be provided for the members of the family. Ordinarily a woman does not interfere with 'outside affairs', that is matters not directly connected with domestic management are believed to be the responsibility of the husband. Similarly, the husband is not expected to meddle too much in the actual running of the household. Nevertheless, major decisions connected with either of these spheres are arrived at after mutual consultation. Cases on record clearly show that in several instances a dominating wife effectively interferes in the management of 'outside affairs', and in time the husband learns not only to take her advice but to depend upon it. On the other hand, instances of the other type are not wanting, where a wife who is consistently negligent about her household duties is sharply rebuked by her husband and is made to carry out his detailed instructions regarding the actual management of domestic affairs. Care and education of the children are primarily the responsibility of the mother, but in this field the father is also expected to give some of his time and attention.

593 837 Both husband and wife watch each other's activities closely. Improvidence and spendthrift habits, excessive drinking and gambling, and extra-marital sex-intrigues to the neglect of the spouse on the part of the husband are critically watched and commented on by the wife. If mild hints do not prove effective she takes recourse to taunts and threats. One of the most important and often-used weapons in the armoury of the wife is her threat

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of running away to her parental home. She often expresses her anger and discontent by neglecting the children and other household activities. If things still do not improve to her satisfaction, she begins to protest loudly, which often ends in open quarrels and altercations. On the other hand, among the men the stereotype that by nature woman is faithless is widely believed, and while they admit that there are some notable exceptions, they nevertheless emphasize the necessity of vigilance on the part of the husband and other responsible members of the family. The suspicion regarding a woman is directed particularly against two things: namely, possibility of a sexual liaison with a 'lover', and that of her stealthily giving money and grain to her relatives on the paternal side. If he suspects his wife, the husband makes suggestive hints and veiled threats. When subsequent events confirm his suspicion, he voices his protests loudly. Now he administers threats of dire consequences, and as a foretaste of what would come if she does not change her ways, he may even beat his wife. If things do not change for the better even with this, the subsequent developments may indeed be very complicated. However, much depends on the personality and disposition of the husband. Rather than allowing the affair to develop into an open scandal, some husbands overlook occasional lapses of their wives; others are so jealous that they cannot forget an incident of this type even when the wives mend their ways and keep on taunting them.

In a joint family, the daughter-in-law does not have any independence unless she becomes the mother of two or three children. Until then she should not be found even speaking to her husband. Efforts at endearment, smiling or even exchanging fond glances would be enough to cause comment and would earn for the couple a reputation for being 'shameless'. The husband in such families often hears the complaints from both his mother and his wife, and leaves them to adjust their relations among themselves.

In the preceding section I have discussed the ethics and ideals of family organization on the three levels of village population. The authoritarian husband and the docile wife is the ideal of people on all three levels, but it is only on the upper level that we find them holding to the ideal in actual practice. Even there, the desire to maintain 'family prestige' and 'good name' forces the husband to overlook some of the faults and failings of the wife and

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593 565 837 [586] to maintain silence about them. But if affairs cross the limits of decency, or the constant misbehaviour of the wife threatens to become the subject of public gossip, the wife receives very harsh treatment and may even be driven out of the house. If she once leaves the house, readmittance for her would be practically impossible among the people of the upper level. On the other two levels, while tempers are roused very quickly and are even expressed publicly in a violent way, the reconciliation is not difficult. Faults of the wife are often openly discussed among them, and she is ridiculed in the presence of others; but she is quite readily forgiven also, and if she does not go astray again, she soon regains her former position in the household.

593 The stereotyped attitudes of wives for husbands and of husbands for wives are common for the community—as a whole. 'A woman should not be trusted. You can never tell when and how she would slip out', say the men in a knowing manner. Others add, 'Much depends on the husband. He must control his wife properly. Once he relaxes his control, then she is practically gone for all times.' The women, on the other hand, regard all men as heartless. 'It is impossible to please a husband; to-day he likes a thing very much; to-morrow he will lose his temper over it.' 'The lot of a woman is difficult. Unlucky ones receive beatings every day; the lucky ones get them only periodically. But is there a woman whose husband never beats her?' In a philosophical vein they add, 'And why not? The man works and earns. If we do not please him he beats us. Of what use are our protests? If a bullock runs away from one owner, will not its second master yoke it to a plough and mercilessly goad it to move faster? If we leave one man and go to another, what guarantee is there that he will not treat us in the same way?'

The wife does not dominate the domestic scene, but if she is tactful she can manipulate things in such a way that her husband will rarely go against her wishes. Gradually she comes to occupy a key position within the household.

581 Finally two significant questions may be raised: what type of wives do most men want? and what type of husbands do most women want? While the ideals and likes and dislikes of individuals are bound to differ greatly on the basis of their personal equations, certain attributes are considered desirable by people from nearly all the different levels of the community. A wife should be, above

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PARENTS AND CHILDREN

593 In general the attitude of the children towards their parents should be one of respect and obedience. Very early in his life a child must learn to act on the traditional norms of showing respect to different categories of people on the basis of their age and kinship status. The parents are entitled to the highest respect from the children; the latter must show it by touching their feet on ceremonial occasions. Between the father and the mother, the former symbolizes authority to a greater degree, while the constant association of the latter develops ties of sympathetic understanding between her and the children. Both must be respected, but of the two the father is feared much more. The mother is generally responsible for the upbringing of the children, but vigilance is also expected of the father, who must provide the corrective when too much leniency on the part of the mother begins to spoil the children. Of course the mother is responsible for the daily care of the children. She baths, clothes and feeds them. She looks after them during their illnesses. While she is doing her normal household work, she is expected to keep an eye on the children, and to ensure that they are kept away from mischief. Until they are about five years old, the life of the children centres around the mother. It is to her that they look for protection and help. 'When he is in a playful mood, the father may fondle the child; but it is the mother who attends to his daily routine.' 'The father,' it is said, 'loves the smiling child, but it is the mother who has to pacify it when it starts crying.'

[858] The nature of the parent-child relationship changes with the age and status of the children. The traditional themes of correct treatment during infancy and early childhood are very different from those of childhood and adolescence. Similarly, when the sons and daughters enter the phases of youth and subsequently of adulthood, the tone of the parent-child relationship undergoes a significant modification.

593 842 Traditional opinion regards a son as an asset; a daughter, a liability. While a son 'belongs' to his parents, a daughter is bound eventually to go to some other family. Care of a daughter is regarded as 'watering a neighbour's tree'; you take all the trouble with it but its fruit goes to someone else. In a large family having many sons, a girl is definitely desired and welcomed. A family having too many daughters and no sons is unhappy, for a son is

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both a psychological and a ritual necessity. Notwithstanding this preference for sons, in actual practice no discrimination is observed in the treatment of children on the grounds of their sex.

As a rule infants are treated with affection. Until a child is four or five years old, it is mainly a responsibility of the mother. The mother nurses it whenever it starts crying indicating its desire to be fed. The child sleeps with its mother in the night and is at liberty to suck whenever it likes. Feeding of the child is primarily the mother's duty. However, when it is six to eight months old, elder sisters, female relations and male members of the household may start sharing this task with her by occasionally giving solid food to the child. While other relations give some food to the child occasionally, its attachment to the mother does not diminish in any significant way, as it is breast-fed by her until it is four or five years old. In teaching the child regular habits of sphincter control, standing, walking and speaking the mother's share is very considerable.

On the whole, an infant is the cause of delight to the family, and it is often fondled and carried about by the elders. They all invariably make funny faces and peculiar noises to make the baby smile, fondle it in many different ways, and find great enjoyment in imitating its meaningless sounds.

The situation radically changes after the child reaches the age of five or six years. Now the parents must be strong and should start disciplining it. At this stage the child finds the father an authoritarian figure and begins to fear him. The liberty that he was allowed during his early childhood is increasingly curtailed. Now the accent is on good behaviour and regular habits. The child is more frequently spanked for being troublesome. Absorbed in the care of a younger baby, the mother may often have to leave the elder child to spend most of his time in his own way. During the day-time he mostly plays out of doors with other children of his age-group. As he grows older the discipline becomes more and more difficult. At first he was punished for being 'troublesome' or for 'crying without reason', but now he has to distinguish clearly between things to be done and things not to be done. The child must be very particular about the latter. These include mostly urinating and defecating inside the house, demanding food and money at odd times too often, beating younger brothers and sisters, stealing, lying and using foul language. As a general rule, the

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in life. Indirect education through folktales, parables and songs is now supplemented by direct and conscious instruction by the parents. The mother seeks to train her daughter to be a good wife; she would often say to her, 'The husband's home is very different from the home of your parents. Here you sit down and the meals are served to you by your mother; there even if you work to the point of breaking your limbs you will not have a word of appreciation. And if you do not work, your tormenting mother-in-law and sisters-in-law will not only abuse you, but will also remember your parents in the foulest language.' Through anecdotes and reminiscences, she creates a vivid picture in the daughter's mind of what she is likely to find when she leaves her first home to enter her second and real home. As the time for the girl's marriage approaches, she finds herself attached to the mother all the more. If the father disapproves of any of the ways of the girl seriously, rather than speak to her directly, he would bring the matter to the notice of her mother, through whom he would seek to influence the daughter. Of course on minor matters he can speak to her directly. Similarly, in the case of grown-up boys, when any action more serious than a mere warning, use of strong language or giving of a threat is called for it is the father and not the mother who is supposed to handle them.

When the children enter their youth and adulthood, there are further changes in the pattern of inter-personal relationships between the parents and children. By this time the girls are married off and leave the parental home to take their place as wives in the homes of their respective husbands. For three or four years they maintain a somewhat intimate and regular contact with their parental home, and their people too are interested in their adjustment and welfare in the new surroundings. Afterwards, however, the girl gets increasingly absorbed in the affairs of her own home, and the memories of childhood friends, as well as those of her parental home, gradually recede into the background. In later years, on ceremonial occasions she returns to her parental home more or less a stranger. Not that the parents are totally unconcerned about the welfare of their daughter, or that the girl has altogether forgotten them, but the distance that separates them (in time and space) gradually takes away much of the glow and warmth of the feelings which they have for one another. On the other hand, the boys also marry and their wives come home to

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884 live with them. They think that this ends their tutelage under their
593 father and establishes them as independent members of the community. The parents do not necessarily share this view, and consequently in the period that follows there is considerable stress and need for understanding and accommodation on both sides. The son is divided between loyalty to his father and his new-found desire for independence on the one hand; his affection for the mother generated by close association from the day of birth and his attraction for the wife on the other. During this stage the parents cannot punish or chastise their sons; they can at best advise
[626] and warn. When repeated advice and warnings do not have the desired effect, methods of employing pressure or ridicule are resorted to. Pressure may be brought to bear on the son through village elders, other influential people and even through his friends. Stories about sons who forget their duties and responsibilities towards their parents because of their wives are legion. Socially it is bad form to be engrossed completely in the wife to the neglect of the parents; it is worse to deny them the respect and courtesy that is their due at the bidding of the wife. The traditional norms of respectful behaviour must be observed in dealing with parents. Intimate subjects, particularly those having a bearing on sex, should not be discussed in the presence of the parents. Opinion should not be proffered unless it is asked for. All forms of endearment must be avoided by the husband and wife in the presence of the elders. It is not very proper for a young father to fondle and kiss his child too often when his parents are present. Finally, parents should not be abused or beaten; as far as possible differences should be smoothed out by peaceful means. Nevertheless, when there are acute differences in the points of view of the parents and children, exchange of hot words and loud quarrels between them are not uncommon.

888 Tradition lays down fairly strict norms regarding the treatment of aged, dependent parents. A son failing in his duty of providing adequately for his old parents, and not caring sufficiently for their comforts, particularly during illness, invites strong social disapproval and comment. He is regarded as a bad example. Elders, well-wishers and friends are bound to remind him repeatedly about his obligations to his aged parents. At this stage the old people are expected not to interfere with the domestic management of the household, and as a price for this non-interference the

606 brothers the daughter-in-law has terms of privileged familiarity,
607 and while they are not expected to cross certain limits, tradition permits them to indulge in joke and banter. Unmarried brothers-in-law provide sympathy and friendship to the harassed wife, but when they grow up they too are drawn to their wives, and the former ties of intimacy are gradually forgotten in the humdrum realities of life.

● SIBLINGS

593 Social ideals demand that there should be solidarity between siblings, especially between brothers, and that they should 'love and help' one another. The older brothers and sisters, particularly the latter, must share the responsibility of looking after the younger ones with their mother. In actual practice up to the age of six or seven they are constant companions; later the sisters gradually become absorbed in feminine pursuits and are thus unable to participate as freely in the children's games as they did before, and the boys too develop greater interest in their respective play-groups. Thus, to begin with, the inter-personal relations between the siblings are closest in their early childhood, but later they develop on their own lines, and distance between the sexes increases gradually.

The older siblings can claim some 'authority' over the younger ones. When the mother is otherwise occupied or is ill, the older siblings have to look after and care for the younger brothers and sisters. Particularly the older sisters have to lend a helping hand to the mother, and very often children become so much attached to them that they come to regard them as substitutes for the mother. While siblings of more or less the same age-group have to 'help, support and defend' one another, in their dealings with the other village children, the older ones must keep an eye on the doings of their younger brothers and sisters and bring their faults to
[861] the notice of the parents. The older siblings can occasionally spank the younger ones under their charge, but they must not do it too often. In return for the limited authority which they enjoy, they have to make some concessions. When a younger sibling starts crying for something, it is expected that an older brother or sister should forgo his own share to appease him. 'He is younger; he does not understand it, but you are older and understand everything. Let him have the thing. After all, he is your brother',

1: Dube E-5 (1951-52) 1955 AW17 Telugu AW17

the parents often say when they want to persuade one of their older children to yield to an apparently 'unreasonable demand' of the younger. When there is a quarrel between the siblings, it is invariably the elder who is admonished. 'One can understand a young child being unreasonable, but being older you should know better', the parents would say. Younger children very often complain to the parents about the older siblings; the latter prefer to deal with them personally when the parents are away. However, if the parents are too partial to their pet child, the others conspire to put him in disfavour. Spying by the younger children, when it is discovered, is punished by the older siblings. They may boycott them, refuse to speak to them, may not allow them to partake of their share of good things to eat, and may tease them in various ingenious ways. They often have a silly nickname for such a child, or they may keep on referring to some oddity in him, and thus tease and cause offence to him constantly. When they are six or seven, brothers and sisters form different groups. Aware of the pattern of male dominance, the brothers begin to regard themselves as superior to the sisters. They dislike doing anything which is regarded as 'feminine work', and if compelled to do so do not fail to express their extreme distaste. They would prefer to do it only if unobserved by their playmates, for if one of them were to notice it the 'news' would soon spread and the other boys would have funny ditties and remarks ready when next they met him. At this stage they begin to assert their superiority over their sisters. The latter must not join them in boy's games. When they are discovered engaging in anything that is regarded as particularly masculine, they are told, 'Now go and mind the pots; there is plenty to do at home.' Family histories recorded for the purpose of this study do not reveal any permanent tender emotional ties between brothers and sisters. It has already been pointed out that a few years after her marriage a girl returns more or less as a stranger to her parental home. On the other hand, there is considerable attachment between the sisters before they are married, but in their case also it gradually wears off after marriage.

The brothers either continue to live in the same house, or, if they separate, they live in the same village. Migrations are comparatively few, and even when one of the brothers moves away he continues to maintain contact with the families of his brothers

still resident in the village. Tradition emphasizes the necessity of solidarity between brothers, even if they live separately. They should stand by and support one another in the hour of need. Indeed, there are considerable misunderstandings and consequent quarrels between families, but they do co-operate and support one another when serious situations arise and call for such assistance. Those who fail to rise to the occasion and do not behave in the expected way are criticized by the community and may even be admonished publicly by the village elders. However, regarding the general tone of inter-personal relations between brothers it may be said that it is not characterized by deep sentiments and affection. Understanding is desirable, but it is believed to be rather difficult to attain. However, ties of kinship inevitably bring them close to each other on ritual occasions and in moments of distress.

OTHER RELATIVES WITHIN THE FAMILY

Brief mention may be made here of certain other categories of relatives who live together in the same house within the joint family.

Grandparents are believed to be indulgent. It is said that they 'always spoil the grandchildren'. It is remarkable that persons who have had a reputation for being very 'strict fathers' behave in an altogether different way with their grandchildren. They are lenient and friendly towards them, and indeed take a lot of interest in them. Amusing grandchildren and being in turn amused by them is one of the favourite pastimes of the grandparents. Most of the time they can be seen fondling them or carrying them about. When their parents are angry with them, young children often take shelter with their grandparents. Very few grandparents ever complain about the behaviour of the little ones, and they would rarely spank them.

An uncle must be treated like the father and an aunt like the mother. But in this relationship much depends on the age and personality of the uncle. If he is nearer in age to the children than to the father, he is regarded as a superior kind of elder brother, but if he is nearer to the father in respect of age, he is feared and respected by the children. Often the children develop their pattern of relationship with an uncle on the basis of his character and personality. 'Some uncles are friendly. They allow us considerable